

# Light...

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# MILLENNIUM

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# Editorial

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## A VERY SPECIAL ISSUE

WELCOME TO THIS **very special issue** of '*Light... on a New World*'. The publishers of this magazine believe that the Holy Bible is the inspired message of God concerning His plan and purpose with the earth and mankind. It is a **very special issue** because, as regular readers will know, Bible teaching shows that God is about to send Jesus Christ back to the earth to establish His Kingdom. Jesus will reign over the kingdom of God for a thousand years during **the seventh millennium**. The very title of this magazine '*Light... on a New World*' implies that there is to be a new age sometime in the future.

This issue of the magazine brings together three items of special interest:

- The imminence of the next millennium.
- The end of the present order of things.
- The return of Jesus Christ to the earth.

All three aspects lead us to consider the same divinely appointed event ordained by God from the beginning. Indeed, the plain and simple teaching of Jesus concerned the Gospel, or the good news of the coming kingdom of God.

The word *millennium*<sup>1</sup> has been understood and recognised by Bible students for centuries. Whilst the word does not appear in the Authorised Version of the Holy Bible, it is nevertheless a good word to impart the concept of scriptural teaching concerning the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth for a thousand years - the **millennium** - under the sovereignty of God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the divinely appointed '**KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.**' [Revelation 19.16] Christ himself taught his disciples during his

1. *Millennium* = a thousand years or a thousandth anniversary; from Latin words **Mille** = a thousand and **Annus** = a year. (Chambers English Dictionary)

ministry and those who would follow him in time to come, to pray thus: '*Thy kingdom come. **Thy will be done in earth**, as it is in heaven.*' [Matthew 6.10] This is an often recited line which in itself is full of meaning for the very near future of the earth and mankind. The disciples were taught to pray for the Kingdom to come on earth.

The following articles have been written by Bible students, all of whom have been Christadelphians throughout their adult life and who are passionately awaiting Christ's advent - his second coming to establish the kingdom of God on earth and bring to an end human misrule on this planet.

The articles in this issue examine four crucial aspects of the Bible's teaching on the subject of the millennium:

1. The reality of human misrule of the earth and the hollowness of the so-called *millennium celebrations*.<sup>2</sup>
2. The relationship between the days of creation and God's 7,000 Year Plan.
3. The ultimate establishment of the kingdom of God in the seventh millennium as foretold in the Bible.
4. The divine offer of salvation from death.

As far as the producers of '*Light... on a New World*' are concerned, this bi-monthly magazine will continue to be produced, God willing, until the return of Christ and the establishment of that Kingdom in the **seventh millennium**.<sup>2</sup> Future issues will include a special '**Millennium Update**' to aid the reader's countdown to the **real millennium** and the fulfilment of God's plan with the earth and mankind, a plan which was expressed so clearly in God's words to Moses 2,500 years ago:

'...as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.'

[Numbers 14.21]

John Meadows  
West Kingsdown, Kent

2. *Contrary to popular thinking, it is agreed by most authorities that the new millennium will commence on 1 January 2,001 and not on 1 January 2,000*

# God's 7,000 Year Plan

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## ...REVEALED ONLY IN THE BIBLE

THE BIBLE IS the only reliable source of information about the future. It is the only place where we can find out about God and what plans, if any, He has for this world. We cannot and should not take any notice of claims made by men to predict the future or to exercise any control over world events. The lesson of history is that man is incapable of ruling himself. The Bible tells us of an arrogant king who had to learn that lesson:

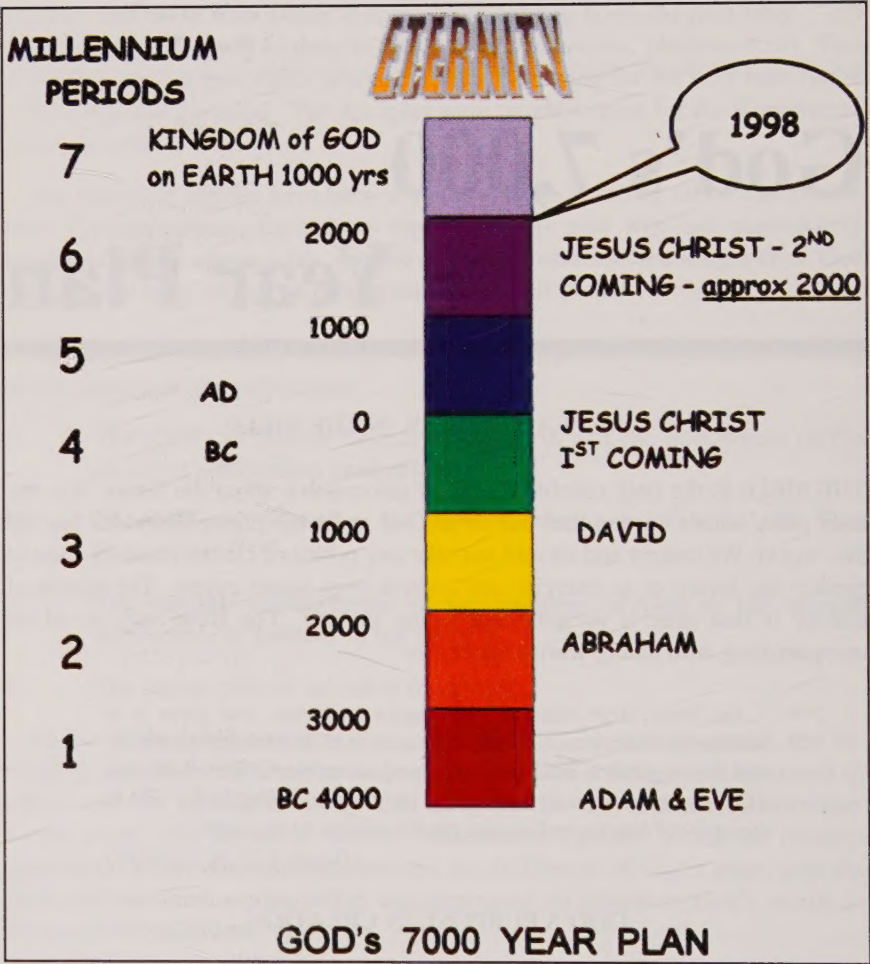
'...the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever he chooses...For his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth...'

*[Daniel 4.25,34,35 NKJV]*

## GOD'S PURPOSE IN CREATION

At the time of Creation, as recorded in the book of Genesis, the world was a wonderful place to live in. God pronounced it '*very good*.' *[Genesis 1.31]* Although Adam and Eve soon spoilt it by disobedience, God's plan for a beautiful, perfect world, with all men and women giving praise to Him, had not failed.

God made this plain through the words of the Old Testament prophets:



*The year 2,000 may not coincide with the Divine plan shown above, due to historical inaccuracies in our calendar.*

'For thus says the LORD, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited...'

[Isaiah 45.18 NKJV]

'For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.' [Habakkuk 2.14 NKJV]

The unfolding story of the Biblical record looks forward to the time when that intention of God will be a reality, when the idyllic conditions of the Garden of Eden are restored to this earth. We must realise that this will involve the eradication of all man's wickedness and sin against God.

### THE CREATION WEEK PARABLE

But when? This is a natural question, the answer to which is indicated by the Creation week parable. At the time of Creation, God made '*two great lights*', the sun and moon, '*for signs and seasons, and for days and years.*' [Genesis 1.14-16 NKJV] This accounts for our universally accepted division of time into days and years and the 28 day cycle of the moon's orbit of the earth relating approximately to one month. But where did the seven day week originate from?

The Bible account in Genesis has the answer. In simple and yet sublime statements it sets out the Creation week, clearly stating what God made on each of the first six days. Then the record tells us something very important about the seventh day:

'And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day...Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he rested from all his work which God had created and made.' [Genesis 2.2,3 NKJV]

The seven day week therefore, is by Divine appointment, whereas God Himself is timeless, existing from eternity to eternity. After the resurrection of Jesus and his ascension to Heaven, some questioned the time of the second coming of Jesus Christ to the earth and the Apostle Peter wrote these words:

'... do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.'

[2 Peter 3.8 NKJV]

Peter's words help us to understand that the Creation week is a **parable**, a word which literally means 'putting things side by side', as Jesus did when he used parables to teach the people about the kingdom of God. Adam was created about

4,000 years before the birth of Christ and we are about to celebrate a new millennium, which takes us to 6,000 years from Creation. The time chart on page 4 shows how this is closely related to the six days of Creation.

But what of the seventh millennium? The Bible has the answer and this confirms the meaning of the Creation week parable:

'Therefore, since a promise remains of entering his rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it...There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered his rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from his.'

[Hebrews 4.1,9,10 NKJV]

Just as God sanctified (set apart as special) and blessed the seventh day, so too has He promised to sanctify and bless the seventh millennium. This is the highlight of the gospel of the kingdom of God preached by Jesus Christ and the apostles. This kingdom of God is the subject of many Old Testament prophecies. The words of Daniel addressed to the king of Babylon are unmistakably clear:

'...the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.' [Daniel 2.44 NKJV]

This is the moment in the history of the world when as Jesus revealed in the book of Revelation:

'...The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever!'

[Revelation 11.15 NKJV]

The Apostle Paul confirmed to his audience at Athens that God has determined the pre-appointed times for every nation of men to dwell on the earth, and added: *'he commands all men everywhere to repent, because he has appointed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he has ordained...'* [Acts 17.30,31 NKJV]

That man ordained by God is His own dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus promised to return and the Bible confirms this essential feature of the coming millennium. At his ascension, the angels gave this assurance to the disciples:

'...This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw him go into heaven.' [Acts 1.11 NKJV]

Earlier, when some expected him to set up God's kingdom and overthrow the Romans, he told them a parable, describing himself as '*a man travelling to a far country*', and the parable specifically tells us that '*After a long time the lord...came.*' [Matthew 25.14,19 NKJV]

### THE SIGNS OF CHRIST'S COMING

The disciples too, wanted to know when Jesus was going to set up this kingdom of God which he had repeatedly spoken to them about, and in Luke's gospel record we find them asking the all-important question:

'...Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign will there be when these things are about to take place?' [Luke 21.7 NKJV]

In his reply Jesus projected the minds of his followers far beyond his own times as is evident from the following verses. He told them what would happen in the world after his ascension and how events would eventually lead to his second coming:

'Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory,' [Luke 21.27 NKJV]

'...when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.' [Luke 21.31 NKJV]

It is evident that Jesus has not yet returned, nor has God's kingdom been established. Because Jesus will keep his promise, we can be confident that these great events are still future. But what are these '**signs**' which Jesus told his disciples about?

We have already noted that Jesus in his reply to the disciples question gave a prophecy that went far beyond the catastrophic events which culminated in the siege and overthrow of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 70. Jesus also foretold that great persecution of the Christians would follow these events:

'But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near...For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.'

[Luke 21.20,22 NKJV]

In AD 70 Jerusalem fell into Gentile (non-Jewish) hands and remarkably remained outside full Jewish control until 1967 when, as a result of the '*six-day*'

war, the Jews regained control of the city. Why is this so significant? We must remember that God's plan for the world is, and always has been centred on the Jews, the descendants of Abraham to whom God gave very significant and important promises. [Genesis 12.1-3]

The long period between AD 70 and this 20th century has been marked by the dispersion and the amazing survival of the Jewish people. This in itself is one of the greatest **'signs of the times'** and will be familiar to all regular readers of 'Light' magazine.

Speaking of this time, Jesus said to his disciples:

'And they (the Jewish people) will...be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles **until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**' [Luke 21.24 NKJV]

This verse indicates a set time and Bible students have seen the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948; the survival of the infant state through the wars with the Arab states that followed and the final takeover of Jerusalem in 1967 as the part fulfilment of this and other prophecies. Indeed, the **'fig tree'** parable that follows confirms this interpretation when we realise that the fig tree is a Biblical symbol for the nation of Israel. Israel is certainly *'already budding'* and by this we know that *'the kingdom of God is near.'* [Luke 21.29-31 NKJV]

Jesus also gave some other important and distinctive **'signs of the times'** by which his followers would know when to expect his return. He told them:

'And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.' [Luke 21.25-27 NKJV]

Whether we consider the international scene or the closer picture of Israel today, this sums up the knife edge of fear and desperation that confronts our world today. A state of perplexity aptly describes the rulers and governments of many nations, particularly Israel and the Arab states. The rebellion and uprising of peoples, symbolised in Luke as the *'sea and the waves roaring,'* is a feature of the end of this sixth millennium.

The prophet Daniel, inspired by God, wrote of this 'time of the end' in these words:

'...there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered...' [Daniel 12.1 NKJV]

But Daniel was in no doubt as to his ultimate reward, for he was told:

'But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.' [Daniel 12.13]

### THE EXACT DATE NOT REVEALED

We would all like to know exactly when Jesus is to return to set up God's kingdom. All the signs given to us in the Bible point unmistakably to the turn of the Millennium. But Jesus himself said that no-one will know the exact time:

'But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not even the angels of heaven, but my Father only.' [Matthew 24.36 NKJV]

And to his disciples, just before he left them he said:

'...It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in his own authority.' [Acts 1.7 NKJV]

We do know however, that he will come unexpectedly to many, like a thief in the night. If we are wise we shall be expecting him at any time, and we shall be prepared to meet him.

### REASONS FOR THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST

We commend to our readers the following reasons for the imminent return of Jesus:

- To fulfil the many Biblical prophecies concerning him.
- To bring to an end six millenniums of man's rule.

- To eradicate the wickedness and inhumanity of man.
- To restore the earth to the perfect conditions that existed in the beginning.
- To bring all mankind to know, honour and praise God.
- To restore Israel fully to their land and to fulfil the promises made to Abraham.
- To restore David's throne in Jerusalem.
- To reign as King of Kings over all the world.

God's Plan has reached a crucial stage as we approach the end of the sixth millennium. Unprecedented changes are in store for this world, all of which will be for the better. Mankind will benefit enormously by the coming of Jesus, far in excess of any millennium celebrations devised by man.

Are you ready for God's seventh millennium ? Whether you are expecting it or not, it will surely dawn. Very soon now this real millennium will be upon us. God the Creator and Sustainer of this Universe has revealed His plan and purpose to those who will look for it in His Word, the Bible. The following articles set out in more detail the great changes to dawn on this unsuspecting world and how you may be part of it.

Phil Goodwin  
Leighton Buzzard, Beds.

# Millennium Celebrations

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AS WE COME closer to the year 2,000, people are beginning to find themselves in the grip of '*millennium mania*.' We have seen throughout history how leaders of a variety of religions, or even non-religious groups, have made serious forecasts about mankind reaching the '*end time*'. They have gathered together to await the arrival of terrible events. Not surprisingly, nothing has happened! This disappointment has left bands of bewildered followers which has often lead to the break up of that particular organisation. Despite this, with the approach of the next millennium, the Media are focusing world attention on this event as evidenced by the number of millennium-related books, newspaper articles, radio and television programmes.

## MILLENNIAL HOLIDAYS AND PARTIES

Travel agents are offering exotic holidays to far-flung parts of the globe to witness the arrival of the new millennium. One holiday company is planning a trek to the summit of Kilimanjaro, the world's highest solitary mountain, to witness the dawn of the next thousand years. Another is offering a sailing trip from New Zealand to the international date line in the South West Pacific Ocean, so that the party can be the first to see the sun rise on the year 2,000. Many other organisations are planning parties and other events as the time draws near.

In addition to this, governments are busy organising millennial events. In London, we have a Millennium Commission with a senior government minister in charge. This Commission has set up a Millennium Awards scheme to distribute millions of pounds of the National Lottery money. The Commission has launched a Millennium Festival consultation paper and is inviting communities throughout the UK to put ideas forward for the wise use of this

money. It is hoping to regenerate and re-use derelict sites from one end of the country to the other. A huge site alongside the River Thames at Greenwich in South East London, has been chosen to build a vast Millennium Exhibition, with a domed building 13 times the size of London's Royal Albert Hall. It will, in the words of government, be *'a display of the very best this country has to offer. It will be educational, forward-looking and fun.'*

### MILLENNIAL DOOM AND GLOOM

With such forward-looking, positive, lively ideas to improve mankind's environment, is there room for the ideas of those who preach 'doom and gloom.' Do we have to take any notice of the cults and religious groups who put before us the idea of a holocaust at the end of our millennium, or the person with a placard declaring *'the end is nigh.'* Have these people got hold of something - a warning perhaps that cataclysmic events are about to engulf the earth, or is it just a hoax - and they are deluded or deranged and really in need of help?

### THE MILLENNIUM BUG

There are, of course, a number of concerns which are of a practical nature and which are rightly exercising the minds of many thinking men and women. Take, for example, the so-called *'millennium bug'* which is not a deadly virus, but rather a term used by the computer industry to describe the problems which will affect many computers, unable to recognise the date 1st January 2,000. At least one airline is contemplating grounding all of its aircraft to be on the safe side. It may seem incredible to many that in this scientific age we have such a serious situation approaching - a situation described as *'a time bomb'* in that so many computers in the world were designed and programmed with only the 20th Century in mind! The answer to the problem is relatively simple - given time! But time is running out and many organisations that are dependent on computers have left it too late. The cost of rectifying the problem in the UK alone has been estimated at £31 billion.

### THE REAL MILLENNIUM

As the year 2,000 inexorably closes in on us, we see that our world of high technology is not so clever after all. Are we really heading for a catastrophe, or

is it possible that some great event is about to happen that will transform this world and the plight of mankind?

The publishers of this magazine are serious students of God's Word, the Bible, and we believe sincerely that God has a purpose and plan with this earth. We hope to show you in the following articles what the Bible says about the millennium - that it is linked with the second coming of Jesus Christ. But our studies show that it is not all 'doom and gloom' - there is a positive, joyful, happy side to his second coming - but radical measures will be needed to put right the many wrongs we witness in this world!

We must emphasize that we cannot associate ourselves with those who advocate taking matters into their own hands, to hurry up those all-important events. The followers of Jesus have been told to wait patiently and look for signs of his coming. Apocalyptic events are forecast in the Bible and we believe it is our task to warn those who will listen that there is a serious message for the world at large. So we urge you to read the following articles, Bible in hand and make yourself ready for Christ's second coming. The promised blessings of the millennial reign of Jesus are far more exciting than the travel agents, governments or party organisers can offer for us to revel in. David, one of the great characters in the Bible who dedicated his life to serving God offers us some sound advice in this uncertain world and we commend his words to you:

'Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass ... For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more ... But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.' [*Psalm 37,5,10,11 NKJV*]

Ken Dennis  
Dartford, Kent

# The Real Millennium

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HOW LONG DOES it take to change the World? One year? 10 years? 100 years? 1,000 years?

How long does it take to put right 6,000 years of human misrule?

God is not bound by time and such questions are irrelevant to Him. Yet in the Bible, God has given us details of His plan of transformation in the timescale of His dealings with the world as we know it. We are living in the '*times of the Gentiles*' - a period of history when the ancient nation and one-time kingdom of Israel has, for nearly two millennia, been uprooted from their ancient territory and scattered throughout the nations as the displaced, persecuted and oft reviled Jewish people.

We unashamedly bring this to your attention because herein is the kernel of God's plan for **the real millennium**, when God will bring about the **restoration** of all things by the second coming and future work of Jesus Christ. This was how his followers understood God's plan centred in him:

'...that times of **refreshing** may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you - even Jesus. He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to **restore** everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.'

[Acts 3.19-21 NIV]

Within the last 100 years, the ancient nation of Israel has been reborn, as foretold in the words of the holy prophets and this is a sign that the **time of restoration** and the **kingdom of God** are near at hand. [see *Ezekiel chapter 37* and *Luke chapter 21*]

It was never God's intention to destroy His people Israel [see *Jeremiah 30.11*], but to humble them and diminish them by their trials and tribulations. During this time of great trouble for Israel, God would also select a great number of Gentile believers who would be the future inheritors of the kingdom of God along with the faithful of all ages.

At some point in history, all the promises made by God to the patriarchs, to the prophets of Israel and the promises of Jesus himself will have to be honoured. This will take place in the seventh millennium. It is the time of **restoration** - the time of transformation to the **kingdom of God on Earth**.

### HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO SET UP GOD'S KINGDOM?

We should first consider what work there is to do. Let's review some of the tasks that the scriptures have foretold will be accomplished by Christ at his second coming. He will:

- defeat the nations who will attack Jerusalem.  
*[Ezekiel 38 & 39; Zechariah 14]*
- raise the responsible dead at the first resurrection. *[Daniel 12.2]*
- judge the responsible. *[Matthew 25.31- 46; 2 Corinthians 5.10]*
- eradicate armaments and war. *[Isaiah 2.4; 66.15,16]*
- establish the worship of God for all nations at the temple in Jerusalem.  
*[Isaiah 2.2-5]*

These are just some of the great tasks facing the new world ruler and those who will assist him as **the real millennium** unfolds. You may ask - why then will God not intervene and put everything right straightaway? The answer is that God has always worked to a plan and He has revealed that plan to man, which will be carried out in His own good time.

### THE PLAN REVEALED THROUGH THE FOUNDATION STONE

In Daniel's explanation of the vision seen by the great king Nebuchadnezzar

of Babylon, where an awesome metallic statue stood before him and was toppled and destroyed by a small stone, we are told that this stone eventually became a great mountain or edifice that filled the whole earth. *[read about the details of this vision in Daniel Chapter 2. Also see picture page 21.]*

This stone was no accident. Daniel tells us that it was 'cut out' or quarried, as the Aramaic word means, 'without hands' implying divine origin. The statue was metallic symbolising man's power and pride; whereas the stone represents Jesus Christ, who is the foundation stone of the new order, the kingdom of God. This is how Jesus himself saw it:

'...Have you never read...The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone (or cornerstone); the Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed.' *[Matthew 21.42-44 NIV]*

This stone will become the cornerstone or the true foundation stone of the kingdom of God that grows into a great edifice along the true and right lines that God has predetermined through the work of His appointed ruler, the Lord Jesus Christ. The **steady growth** of the kingdom of God will take place throughout the earth just as a builder constructs a building which 'grows' from the foundation upwards.

## THE REAL MILLENNIUM OF THE BIBLE

The last book of the New Testament, the book of Revelation, was given to show God's servants a glimpse of what to expect in the future when the 'time of the end' comes upon us. The key event in this book is the **Apocalypse** or revelation of Jesus Christ at that time. It tells us in symbolic language, that great political and social changes will happen in the world, developing in opposition to the true Gospel proclaimed by Jesus Christ. Things will go from bad to worse for mankind and the true followers of Jesus **until ...**Christ will suddenly come back to the earth, as we read in this book:

'Behold, I come like a thief!...' *[Revelation 16.15 NIV]*

Revelation chapters 17 and 18 describe the judgments that will fall on the

unbelieving nations and then in chapters 19 and 20 we have a vision of the victorious Christ with his saints who will be endowed with immortality and given authority over the nations as rulers (just as Jesus promised to his disciples - see Luke 22. 28-30). In Revelation chapter 20 we have a reference to this **real millennium** or 1,000 years. We read concerning those who are Christ's true servants:

'...They came to life and reigned with Christ for a **thousand years**...This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.' [Revelation 20.4-6 NIV]

### WHO WILL BE IN THE KINGDOM?

At this '**first resurrection**', when Christ returns to the earth, many faithful (and unfaithful) followers of all ages will be raised to judgment and given their reward or punishment as the case deserves. This will include men such as the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and faithful women like Sarah, Rachel and Ruth, together with the prophets and apostles such as Daniel and Paul, as well as countless others. This rulership and authority over the remaining mortal population are the first parts of their reward in the kingdom of God. It is the restoration of the kingdom of Israel which was anticipated by the apostles when they asked Jesus that very question. [see Acts 1.6] Jesus had already promised them everlasting life and rulership over the nation of Israel. [Matthew 19.28]

The mortal population who survive God's judgements on the nations will be encouraged to walk in God's ways and adopt His standards of law and discipline as we read in Isaiah's prophecy:

'Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war any more.' [Isaiah 2.3,4 NIV]

Here is the answer to the current 'dis-united nations' scenario that Daniel

presented in his prophecy concerning the great image and also foretold by Christ in *his* prophecy of wars and international strife. Strong rulership, wise counsel, good laws and irresistible force justly applied, are all characteristics of the millennial government of Jesus Christ. There will be mortal (dying) and immortal (undying) inhabitants during the seventh millennium, but as the final article makes clear, **you too** can share in everlasting life and rulership of the world with Christ.

### WHAT ABOUT THE POLLUTED STATE OF THE WORLD?

Surely the kingdom of God will not just be a continuation of the present world order with all its insoluble problems? You would be right to ask. Yes, things will have to change. The earth itself will need to be renewed. Remember, there will be divine wisdom in the earth. Much of the pollution existing in the world has been brought about by man's greed and unwise use of natural resources. Among other things, there is the need to process and distribute huge quantities of food to a hungry world. We are given a glimpse of future bounty in the millennium that will eliminate the need for agricultural chemicals and pesticides:

'The days are coming, declares the LORD, when the reaper will be overtaken by the ploughman and the planter by the one treading grapes. New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from all the hills. I will bring back my exiled people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them...' [Amos 9.13-15 NIV]

There will be restraint on the curse imposed in the garden of Eden. Expectation of age will increase for the mortal population: '*...he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth...*' [Isaiah 65.20 NIV]

Great blessings will follow for those who subject themselves willingly to the rule of Christ and his great company of wise rulers. Furthermore the moral pollution, violence and exploitation, which so characterises our age, will be diminished and destroyed:

'In his days the righteous will flourish; prosperity will abound till the moon is no more...He will take pity on the weak and the needy and

save the needy from death. He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight.'

[Psalm 72.7,13,14 NIV]

## WHAT ABOUT THE MORTAL POPULATION?

When Christ returns, the Bible tells us that there will be a time when God's judgements are poured out on the world causing world-wide death and destruction. Those remaining, will come under the influence of the divine rule of Christ as it expands through the world. As in all past ages, God will open a door for those who respond in faith to the call of salvation. For those who **do** respond and obey the laws of Christ, there is a future prospect of immortality at the **second** resurrection, which will take place at the end of the seventh millennium. We have a glimpse of this in the book of Revelation:

'And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books...The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.' [Revelation 20.12,14,16 NIV]

These appear to be drastic measures but, having experienced the unparalleled blessings of the millennial age, with the open evidence of divine beneficence, will man really have any excuse? Will millennial man be able any more to say '*Who is God?*' On the contrary, we read in the Bible:

'No longer will a man teach his neighbour, or a man his brother, saying, "Know the LORD," because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD...'

[Jeremiah 31.34 NIV]

## BEYOND THE MILLENNIUM

**The real millennium** is the biblical equivalent of the seventh day of Creation. As explained in the previous article (page 5) that was the day of rest, when God ceased from His great work. During this period there is a '*restoration of all things*' and particularly the restoration of Israel as God's kingdom on earth which will be the nucleus of the kingdom of God. Christ, as king of the Jews,

will judge among the nations as we have seen. However, **sin**, **disease**, and **death** will be abolished finally only after the 1,000 years have ended. The book of Revelation gives a picture of suppressed sin being allowed to resurface at the end of the final millennium, in order that God could finally expose this evil and destroy it completely and for ever. This is at the time of the **second** resurrection we referred to earlier, when the remaining mortal population will be judged:

‘When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth - Gog and Magog - to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God’s people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them.’

[Revelation 20.7-9 NIV]

### A NEW ORDER OF THINGS

In the Bible we can glimpse beyond the **1,000 years** that we have called the **real millennium**. The last two chapters in Revelation give us a vision of a future age where there is no more ‘*death or mourning or crying or pain*.’ [Revelation 21.4] It is a time of perfection, a true paradise. It is the time that God has planned for all these long years of man’s occupation of the world: years that in God’s eyes are but the blink of an eyelid. In reality it will be the prelude to **Eternity**. We have difficulty comprehending this now but the picture we have is real enough. The restoration will be complete, the family of God will be complete, everything will then be ‘new,’ as Peter the disciple of Jesus explains in his letter:

‘...in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.’

[2 Peter 3.13 NIV]

God himself has made the **promise**. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the **guarantee** of its fulfillment. He asks us to put our faith and trust in Him. Don’t you think He means to keep His revealed plan? Do you really have any excuse to doubt the Word of God?

**Apart from this, what hope do you have for the future?**

Roland Tremaine  
Ipswich, Suffolk

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**HEAD  
of gold**  
BABYLON

---

**BREAST  
& ARMS  
of silver**  
MEDO-PERSIA

---

**BELLY &  
THIGHS  
of brass**  
GREECE

---

**LEGS  
of iron**  
ROME

---

**FEET  
of iron & clay**  
DIVIDED STATE OF  
NATIONS

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NEBUCHADNEZZARS IMAGE (DANIEL CHAPTER 2)

# The Millennium and You

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THE ARRIVAL OF the kingdom of God under the control of the righteous king, Jesus Christ, will change the world. Many of the evils on the earth today, which are so deplorable, will be removed for ever. In the real millennium, there will be joy and happiness among mankind who will at last listen to and obey the Word of God and worship Him, filling the earth with His glory. There will also be special blessings for those who have obeyed and served God during their lives. The greatest of these, will be the gift of eternal life. Our present limited capacity to understand blessings such as immortality or the possession of irresistible power from God is acknowledged in the Scriptures. However, God's Word contains wonderful word pictures of the glories to be revealed in that not-too-distant future age. Due to the limits of our understanding there is much that is not recorded. This can be evidenced by the words of Isaiah quoted by the Apostle Paul:

'...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.' [*1 Corinthians 2.9*]

Our readers will react in a variety of ways to what they have read in the previous articles in this issue. There is nothing new in this. In fact, these reactions have been prevalent from the earliest days of God's dealings with men. The preaching of the Apostles in the first century AD resulted in differing responses from their hearers. The record of Paul's visit to Athens, where he preached the same things as those set out in this magazine, reads as follows:

‘...God... now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.’ [Acts 17.30,31]

The following verse explains the reaction of the hearers. ‘*Some mocked*’ we are told and some said ‘*We will hear thee again of this matter.*’ In modern parlance this might be put ‘*We are not really interested in what you have to say, but we will listen to you again when we have nothing better to do!*’ These have been typical responses to the preaching of God’s Word in every age.

However, not everyone responded to the apostles’ teaching in this way. There were some who are described as:

‘...more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed...’  
[Acts 17.11,12]

Our advice to the mockers of the first category and also to those who might listen again when it is more convenient, is to re-examine the many evidences to the truth of the Bible record which have been discussed in the pages of the Light Magazine. This has been convincingly demonstrated by articles about the confirmation of archaeology, the power of fulfilled prophecy, the authority with which the Bible speaks, its high moral tone and the harmony within its pages.

To those who wish to look more closely into the promises of God we urge you to read on. For it is a desirable thing not only to witness the wonderful events, but also to play a part in bringing them about in conjunction with the work of Christ himself. It is important then, that we prepare for that revolution in the affairs of the world which will take place with his return ‘*with power and great glory.*’ [Matthew 24.30]

The promise was made in veiled terms in the garden of Eden that evil, including death, would at length and in God’s good time, be overcome. This would be achieved through one of Adam’s descendants - through one of his own race - a human being. Although this descendant would suffer dreadfully at the

hands of evil men, this would not be permanent but would ultimately secure the re-union of Adam's race to the Almighty Creator. [see Genesis 3.15]

The promise was reiterated and enlarged to Abraham, in a continuation of the revelation of God's purpose with the earth. It must be clear to anyone who believes that the earth was created by the wisdom and power of God, that this great work was performed for a purpose. We might ask what that purpose was? The Scriptures give us the answer within a symbolic vision of the millennial age:

'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and FOR THY PLEASURE they are and were created.' [Revelation 4.11]

Abraham believed what God said to him and this was attributed to Abraham as faith. Because of his faith God promised that he would be the father of a great nation, that is the Jewish people, and that 'in him' that is through Abraham and his 'seed' (one particular descendant as shown by Paul in Galatians 3.16) all nations of the earth would be blessed. [Genesis 12.2,3; 17.6-8] The blessing of the nations will be realised when the millennial reign of Christ replaces the rule of men and when the curse of sin introduced by our first parents is lifted.

The promises of God run through the Scriptures like a golden thread. They are certainly repeated time and time again. We see another great revelation to David, King of Israel, 'a man after mine (God's) own heart.' [Acts 13.22]

David was told that after his death a descendant of his would be raised up whose kingdom would be established 'for ever,' that this kingdom and throne would be the same as David's, i.e. the throne of Israel, and that all this would be witnessed by David (now dead), a clear reference to a future resurrection. [2 Samuel 7.12-16]

The man described as the 'seed of Abraham' in whom all peoples would be blessed and the one referred to in the promise to David as the heir to the throne of Israel, is also referred to in the New Testament with even greater clarity. The angel declared to Mary the details surrounding the forthcoming conception and birth of her son:

'...and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him

the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end...that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.'

[Luke 1.31-35]

The death and resurrection of Jesus was taught by his apostles and they constantly refer to his promised return to the earth to re-establish the kingdom of God in fulfilment of the promises referred to previously. This was what the preaching of Christ was all about, for we are told that he '*...came into Galilee, preaching the gospel (the good news ) of the kingdom of God.*' [Mark 1.14] So important an aspect of Christ's teaching was this restoration of the throne of Israel, that after the resurrection of Jesus his disciples wanted to know when the promise was going to be fulfilled. They wanted it to happen there and then; '*wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*' they asked. [Acts 1.6] Afterwards, they were promised by the angels when Jesus ascended to heaven that he would return again in the same manner as he had gone into heaven. [Acts 1.9-11]

This then is the hope of the Gospel, the true teaching of Jesus and his followers in the first century. Christ will return to the earth with God's power, to bring about the re-establishment of the kingdom of God and the blessing of all nations.

From the above, it will be seen that the true gospel is a Jewish hope. What then has all this got to do with people who are not Jews? Can they be included in these wonderful prospects or are they only for Jews, the natural descendants of Abraham?

The Jews refused and still refuse to accept Jesus as their Messiah. However, the offer of salvation and sharing in the arrangements of the restored Kingdom was offered to other nations as well. In the reference already quoted we read: '*God... commandeth all men, every where to repent*' and in another place it is recorded '*The Lord is...not willing that any should perish*'. [2 Peter 3.9] Paul, when preaching to the Jews who contradicted and blasphemed, reprimanded them for their faithlessness in the following way:

'...It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.' [Acts 13.46]

So, every one who will listen, believe and **act upon** what they learn can become related to Abraham and his seed Jesus Christ and to the restored kingdom of God. The qualifying words are **act upon**, for having believed these promises and being confident that God will bring all His promises to fruition, to see and share in these wonderful things, requires action on our part. For whilst God does not want anyone to perish, in order to be saved there are requirements and qualifications. Salvation and inheritance of the promises is conditional upon following the course laid down by God. Christ himself said:

‘Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.’ [Matthew 7.21]

We must, therefore, establish what the will of the Father is in order to perform it and thus be qualified, in the mercy of God, to enter the Kingdom when Christ returns.

#### WHO THEN WILL BE SAVED?

Jesus gave the answer to this question, when he instructed his disciples:

‘...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned (or condemned).’ [Mark 16.15,16]

The type of person that God will accept, is described by Him through the prophet Isaiah:

‘...to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.’ [Isaiah 66.2]

Christ showed by his own example, that baptism is essential for salvation, because it is a requirement of the Almighty. When Jesus came to John the Baptist by the river Jordan and asked to be baptised, John was unwilling saying that he himself ought to be baptised by Jesus. Jesus replied:

‘.. Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness...’ [Matthew 3.13-15]

This is the first act of obedience to God and demonstrates five things as shown by the Apostle Paul in Romans chapter 6:

1. A willingness to be obedient to God's commandments.
2. A public declaration of faith in the promises of God.
3. A symbolic association with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.
4. A washing away of past sins through repentance.
5. Rising to a new life in Christ and observance of his commandments.

In the book of Acts there are many references showing baptism to be a total immersion in water. You only have to read of the Ethiopian Eunuch, [See Acts 8.27-40] to realise that water deep enough to cover a person is required. It is also clear from this example that a full knowledge and belief of the Gospel message and the principles involved is essential prior to baptism. How else could the symbolic actions of burial and washing be carried out? The idea that baptism can be achieved by sprinkling is not supported by scripture.

In many other examples men and women who believed the Apostles teaching were baptised straightaway. One such example reads:

'But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.' [Acts 8.12]

Paul wrote to the Galatian believers:

'For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.' [Galatians 3.27-29]

Having risen from the waters of baptism, the true believer is related to the promises to Abraham and therefore to the glories of the future millennial age and

rulership with Christ in his kingdom. Thereafter the believer must prepare for a position of influence within it by application of the commandments of Christ in every part of his or her life. Jesus said:

'Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.'

[John 15.14]

As Jesus explained to one enquirer regarding the most important commandment, there are really only two, which if followed carefully, encompass all the others. Firstly, to love God with all your being and secondly, to love your neighbour as yourself. [Matthew 22.37-39] Simple though these may be to record, they are a life's work to implement. This is the duty of the servant of God, newly risen from the waters of baptism, to practise these commands in every area of life and it remains a duty to faithfully apply them through the rest of his or her life or until Jesus returns.

In the mercy of God there is still time to joyfully submit to the requirements of belief, baptism, following Christ and waiting patiently for his return and the establishment of the kingdom of God, in which there will be a literal fulfillment of those words of the angels at the time of Christ's birth concerning the Seventh millennium:

'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.' [Luke 2.14]

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